

India and Japan Discuss Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation

On August 5, Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura, on a visit to India, had his second strategic dialogue with Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee. In response to a request from Mukherjee for support of the U.S.-India agreement on civil nuclear cooperation, Koumura acknowledged that India's use of nuclear power was significant in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Still, the Japanese foreign minister stated, "As the only nation ever to have been the victim of atomic bombings, Japan has endeavored to realize the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and ultimately the abolition of nuclear weapons. Japan must be convinced that the agreement will not undermine the international nuclear non-proliferation regime." He also conveyed to India that Japan would maintain its position in asking India to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The parties confirmed that they would work in the direction of security cooperation in the future, looking toward the upcoming visit by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Japan this autumn. In the area of individual and academic exchange activities, Japan agreed to cooperate with the new Indian Institute of Technology.

In the morning of the same day, prior to the strategic meeting between the two foreign ministers, Koumura paid a courtesy call on the Indian leader. At a local press conference after their meeting, Koumura said that Prime Minister Singh had presented his case for the U.S.-India nuclear agreement. He also said that he had told Singh that Japan would participate in discussions at the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), from the viewpoints both of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening nuclear non-proliferation.

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